



DATE: September 5, 2006

TO: Medicare Advantage Organizations
Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plans
1876 Cost Plans
Demonstrations

FROM: David A. Lewis, Acting Director, Medicare Advantage Group

SUBJECT: Q&A for Call Center Requirements

CMS has developed a Q&A to clarify its call center requirements reflected in the 2007 Medicare Marketing Guidelines. Call center information is listed below.

Q. How do the call center requirements apply to MA-Only?

A. Medicare Advantage Organizations not offering Part D plans should have call center capabilities to respond to beneficiary inquiries and provide services to plan members during normal business hours.

Q. Do the customer service call center requirements in the Medicare Marketing Guidelines released on July 25, 2006, apply to MA-PD and 1876 Cost Plans that offer Part D?

A. Yes. MA-PD and 1876 Cost plans that offer Part D are required to comply with the call center requirements in the Medicare Marketing Guidelines.

Q. Are MA-PD and 1876 Cost Plans offering Part D required to provide to Medicare Advantage information during the extended call center hours?

A. MA-PDs, including Cost Plans that offer Part D, must comply with the call center requirements stated in the HPMS notices issued on February 23, 2006, and April 19, 2006, the guidance in the 2007 Call Letter released April 4, 2006, and the Medicare Marketing Guidelines released on July 25, 2006.

CMS encourages organizations to provide, in addition to the prescription drug program information, essential Medicare Advantage (MA) information to current and prospective enrollees and their representatives during the extended call center hours and days. Given that MA-PDs and Cost Plans offering Part D are integrated care programs, we believe it is reasonable for current and prospective MA enrollees and their representatives to expect organizations to furnish MA-related information during the extended call center hours.

If an organization is unable to provide MA-related information during the extended hours, alternatives such as an interactive voice response system may be used to answer or direct MA-related inquiries. Organizations should clearly and promptly state the hours in which MA-related information is accessible to current and prospective enrollees on their call center lines or through publications if during the extended hours the information not available.